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# General Assembly
Sixtieth session

*Official Records*

## First Committee
3rd meeting
Tuesday, 4 October 2005, 10 a.m.
New York

*Chairman:* Mr. Choi Young-jin ..... (Republic of Korea)

*The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.*

**Agenda items 85 to 105 (*continued*)**

**General debate on all disarmament and international security agenda items**

**Mr. Antonov** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): On behalf of the Russian delegation, allow me to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the chairmanship of the First Committee. I believe that, under your wise leadership, we shall be able successfully to carry out the tasks before us.

The important ideas to emerge from the general debate at this sixtieth anniversary session of the General Assembly have confirmed the essential role of the United Nations in world affairs. The main task before us is to enhance the effectiveness of the Organization, bring the world community together to confront threats and ensure international security, with stricter compliance with United Nations resolutions. As President Putin stressed in his address to the current session of the General Assembly (see *A/60/PV.5*), there is now a crucial need to adjust the Organization to the new historic realities. But that process must be constructive. It should take into account the lessons of the past, and it should unite, not separate. All of this is relevant to the matters to be discussed by the First Committee.

Various views have recently been put forth about the crisis in the multilateral non-proliferation regime. Our expectations in that regard remain unfulfilled. We all expected more of the 2005 World Summit Outcome (*resolution 60/1*) and the 2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Nevertheless, on balance the work of the United Nations continues to be positive. We have been able to prevent or resolve dozens of armed conflicts and have succeeded in keeping weapons of mass destruction (WMD) from falling into hands of international terrorists.

We would like to clearly reiterate our firm support for strengthening multilateralism in addressing the objectives of disarmament and WMD non-proliferation on the basis of strict compliance with relevant international agreements in that regard.

Russia is fully complying with its commitments under article VI of the NPT and under treaties with the United States, as well as under unilateral nuclear disarmament initiatives. That has been eloquently demonstrated by the facts: as compared to 1991, there has been a five-fold reduction of the total stockpiles of nuclear weapons. These reductions — which are indeed labour-intensive, technically complex and very costly efforts — are thus well under way. We adhere to the principle of irreversible nuclear weapons reduction. As President Putin emphasized, we are ready to take new constructive steps in this field.

The issue of the non-proliferation of WMD, including its counter-terrorism component, remains the focus of world politics. The Group of Eight (G-8) leaders once again set out their approach to those

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issues in a statement issued at their Gleneagles meeting.

We have yet to analyse the outcome of the 2005 NPT Review Conference. However, it can already be stated now that its work was useful. Fundamental principles shared by all participants were reaffirmed. No one called the Treaty outdated or suggested that another document should be drafted to replace it. All participants stressed the vitality and validity of the NPT as the basis for the nuclear non-proliferation regime. We are certain that new challenges to the regime of nuclear non-proliferation can and should be tackled on the basis of the NPT.

Russia considers the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) as one of the key instruments in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. We call upon all States that have not yet done so to sign and ratify the CTBT as soon as possible, in particular those whose ratification is required for the Treaty's entry into force. In the meantime, it is also important to ensure that the moratorium on nuclear-weapons testing and other nuclear explosions is observed.

We note with satisfaction the outcome of the fourth round of six-party talks on the Korean peninsula nuclear issue, concluded on 19 September in Beijing. We welcome the pledge taken by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to abandon nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programmes, and to return as soon as possible to compliance with the NPT and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). We look forward to further successful continuation of the six-party process with the ultimate goal of the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula. We support efforts to find a balanced solution that takes into account the legitimate security interests of all parties involved in the negotiating process.

We regard the resolution on the Iranian nuclear programme adopted on 24 September by the IAEA Board of Governors as a signal for continuing and expanding cooperation between the Agency and Iran to clarify the remaining questions. It is our belief that the Iranian problem can be resolved within the framework of IAEA, and we are in favour of more intensive dialogue among all the States concerned. It is necessary to work out decisions that, on the one hand, would remove all doubts about the peaceful character of Iran's nuclear activities, and, on the other, satisfy the legitimate energy needs of that country.

New challenges require new solutions. My delegation appreciates the broad support we received in the formulation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) and the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism. Now it is necessary to ensure their full and universal implementation.

Among the central threats to global security is the danger that the arms race will spread to outer space. We have the capacity to prevent such a scenario and it is in the interest of all nations that we do so. We appreciate the broad support for the proposal by Russia and China — sponsored also by a number of other States at the Conference on Disarmament — to formulate a new universal instrument on the prevention of the weaponization of outer space and the use or threat of the use of force against outer space objects. Our proposal is gradually gaining substance, and work continues. We are looking forward to the earliest re-establishment of the Conference on Disarmament's Ad Hoc Committee on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space.

Transparency and confidence-building measures will reduce the motivation for deploying weapons in outer space and enhance safety in near-Earth space. In recent years, Russia has put forward several initiatives in that regard. We would like specifically to recall Russia's unilateral statement that it would not be the first to deploy weapons of any kind in outer space. In that connection, we welcome the 23 June 2005 statement by members of the Collective Security Treaty Organization to undertake the same voluntary political commitment. Once again, we call upon all States to join the Russian initiative.

We believe that the time has come for us to take a comprehensive view of the possible range of potential confidence-building measures in outer space, and to update the United Nations proposals from the early 1990s on that topic. We intend to submit a new draft resolution entitled "Transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space activities", for the Committee's consideration. We appeal to all States to support our draft resolution.

The Group of Governmental Experts on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International

Security, chaired by the Russian expert, completed its two years of work in 2005. Though it was not possible to arrive at a consensus text for a final report, the discussions of the group were quite useful (see *A/60/202*). The issue of information security is multifaceted: it affects the national security of States and overall international stability. Like many other delegations, we believe that the Group should continue its work. With that in mind, we are submitting a draft resolution entitled "Developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security" for the Committee's consideration. We call upon all States to support the draft resolution.

We stand for the unconditional fulfilment by all States of their obligations under the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), especially those relating to the destruction of chemical weapons stockpiles. We support efforts to universalize the CWC, as well as the creation and enhancement of national implementation mechanisms. We must continue to search for ways to strengthen the Bacteriological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BWC). Elaboration of legally binding BWC verification measures remains essential. The programme of work adopted by the fifth BWC review conference is to be completed this year. In that connection, we attach great importance to the successful and productive holding of the sixth BWC review conference in 2006.

The deadlock in the Conference on Disarmament must be broken as soon as possible. We believe that the current situation is not the result of procedural shortcomings but, rather, has developed owing to the interests and attitudes of States. We hope that the States that are not ready to support the compromise proposals in Geneva today will listen to the opinion of the overwhelming majority and demonstrate the flexibility we expect.

For years now, and through no fault of ours, the entry into force of the revised Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE Treaty), adapted in 1999, has been postponed. Russia did its utmost to secure the early entry into force of the revised Treaty, including, in summer 2004, ratifying the Agreement on adaptation of the CFE Treaty. Now it is our partners' turn. We have no intention of keeping up the pretence that the CFE Treaty of 1990 serves its purpose or that it suits us as it is. It is clear that the discussions about the future of the Treaty — to be held at the third CFE review conference next May — will be difficult.

Russia ratified the Amended Protocol II to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons. The process of ratification related to the modified scope of the Convention has been launched, and similar work has started on Protocol V.

Another achievement in the disarmament field this year is agreement on text for a draft international instrument on marking and tracing illicit small arms and light weapons. Its adoption at the current session of the General Assembly will help States to identify and trace illicit small arms and light weapons in a timely and reliable manner.

Please accept our assurance, Mr. Chairman, that the Russian delegation stands ready to give you the necessary assistance to achieve a constructive outcome in the work of our Committee.

**Mr. Baali** (Algeria) (*spoke in French*): I would like to express my delegation's heartfelt congratulations to you, Sir, on your well deserved election to the chairmanship of the First Committee. I would like also to congratulate your predecessor, Mr. Luis Alfonso de Alba, as well as Mr. Nobuyasu Abe, Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs.

We come to this session following the High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly, which, in more ways than one, will prove to have been of particular importance. It was an occasion for the world's leaders to reaffirm their commitment, among other things, to the rule of law and the multilateral system so that we can jointly confront the threats and challenges facing the world and undertake a solemn commitment to move forward in the domains of international peace and security.

However, we must note that, apart from the solemnity of the event and the statements of good intentions, the reality is quite different as far as the issues on the First Committee's agenda are concerned. Proof of that can be found in the outcome document adopted at the summit (*resolution 60/1*), which was stripped of one of the basic elements of the framework of international relations: disarmament and non-proliferation issues.

The exclusion of such an important component could not be interpreted as an isolated case or even as

justified by the imperatives of a tight negotiation timetable. Rather, it was the logical consequence of an increasingly less favourable international context for the advancement of the nuclear disarmament cause — a context in which the principles of multilateralism and promotion of the rule of law no longer seem to enjoy unanimous support. That situation, we believe, must be viewed as one of the many manifestations of the impasse in the multilateral nuclear disarmament effort.

The lethargy into which the Conference on Disarmament has sunk, the years-long quest for a hypothetical agenda, the deplorable failure of the seventh Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the paralysis of the Disarmament Commission reflect all the frustration and disenchantment that have assailed countries whose attachment and commitment to the cause of disarmament are being sorely tested today.

Yet the context that encouraged the end of the cold war and of the ideological confrontation favoured the advent of an atmosphere of detente and cooperation that indicated better prospects for dialogue and cooperation in the area of disarmament. Indeed, we witnessed a qualitative change in attitudes that led to a softening of positions and to the freeing up of initiatives long held hostage to narrow interests and power plays.

Thus, together with the achievements of the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) I and START II, the Chemical Weapons Convention and the conclusion of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), all those efforts were aimed at freeing humanity from the spectre of weapons of mass destruction that confronted it. The hopes thus aroused are now giving way to disenchantment, because none of the 13 practical steps decided upon by common agreement of all States parties at the sixth NPT Review Conference, in April 2000, to totally eliminate their nuclear arsenals has even begun to be implemented.

The present session therefore is taking place in a worrisome international context heavy with consequences for international peace and security. The disarmament process is now showing disturbing signs of running out of steam. Its fate is becoming very uncertain, and its goals are fading from view. The risks linked to nuclear proliferation, the development of new generations of weapons, the emergence of new threats and the decline of multilateralism are among the challenges confronting the international community.

The proliferation of nuclear weapons is unquestionably a threat to international peace and security, and the possession of weapons of mass destruction is a real and constant threat to humanity's very existence.

Although we are aware of the complexity of the disarmament endeavour and of the enormous efforts that we must still undertake to overcome the obstacles blocking its achievement, we are firmly convinced that general and complete disarmament remains the only viable option for future generations, given a prevailing political will among States and a joint effort to resume the debate on this issue in all its aspects. We believe that such an effort requires a strategic approach that would promote the end of the outdated doctrine of nuclear deterrence, excluding any initiative or measure likely to jeopardize the climate of détente and to weaken everything that has been patiently achieved in recent years.

We will accomplish that even more easily if the commitment made by nuclear States to totally eliminate their nuclear arsenals begins to be met through good-faith negotiations on the total elimination of nuclear weapons, as strongly supported in the July 1996 advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice.

It is also urgent that the Conference on Disarmament resume its work, that it finally agree on a programme of work and that it focus, as the only multilateral negotiating forum, on addressing the essential issues that concern it. In that connection, my delegation calls on all the parties concerned to show a spirit of cooperation with a view to successfully implementing the proposal submitted by the representatives of Algeria, Canada, Chile, Colombia and Sweden — the five ambassadors' proposal.

Algeria is resolutely committed to fulfilling all its obligations under the international instruments to which it is a party. We will spare no effort to support and promote initiatives aimed at relaunching the nuclear disarmament process. My country's commitment and unfailing attachment to promoting international peace and security are an abiding feature of its foreign policy. We believe that nuclear disarmament — which must remain the absolute

priority — is the best way to free humanity from the threat of annihilation.

Scrupulous compliance with and implementation of the commitments undertaken in the areas of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation — necessary in any effort aimed at consolidating international peace and security — must be accompanied by a joint international effort to promote technological cooperation and scientific exchanges with a view to guaranteeing to all States the chance to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. It is important that a balance be struck between, on the one hand, concern to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons and, on the other, the need for the transfer of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes related to social and economic development.

My country, which is preparing to sign an Additional Protocol to its International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards agreement, reaffirms its support for and adherence to all measures aimed at strengthening the non-proliferation regime. In that regard, we believe that all nuclear programmes must be carried out in the fullest transparency, in close cooperation with the relevant international institutions and for exclusively peaceful purposes. We also believe that such measures must in no way impede the right of States, enshrined in article IV of the NPT, to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. In a world striving to bring about a qualitative change in international relations, the atom must henceforth become exclusively a vehicle for well-being.

Regional nuclear disarmament and the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones undeniably help to attain the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation and to preserve international peace and security. Today, it is comforting to see that nuclear-weapon-free zones have been established — under the treaties of Tlatelolco, Raratonga, Bangkok and Pelindaba — in Latin America and the Caribbean, in the South Pacific, in South-East Asia and in Africa. Furthermore, we take this opportunity to commend the decision taken by the countries of Central Asia and by Mongolia to establish nuclear-weapon-free zones. Those are achievements that help reduce the risks of nuclear proliferation and undoubtedly help to strengthen peace and security in those regions.

Algeria is among the countries that actively contributed to the formulation and adoption of the Treaty of Pelindaba, which we ratified on 11 February 1998. We are also fully committed to efforts and initiatives aimed at promoting the entry into force of that important instrument.

However, we regret the delay in establishing a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. In the current context, it is more necessary than ever before that the international community send a strong signal to demand that Israel conform to international legality and that it remove the main — indeed, the only — obstacle to attaining that important objective and thus help strengthen peace and stability in that particularly turbulent region of the world.

In the interdependent world now being built, where economic and social development seems to be the true basis for peace and coexistence among peoples, the entire international community is called upon to face together the new challenges posed by the globalization of trade and the disappearance of borders, freeing humanity from the scourge of war and new perils that threaten it such as terrorism, organized crime and pandemics. Those, in any case, are the things Algeria would like to occur. They also constitute the basic principles around which we have shaped our country's policy. We have always sincerely favoured dialogue and agreement, as well as the strengthening of security in a spirit of solidarity and within the traditional groupings to which our country belongs — be that the Maghreb or Mediterranean regions or Africa.

In the same vein, my delegation welcomes the international community's awareness of the risks posed by the proliferation and illicit circulation of light weapons, as well as the beginning of the process to combat the phenomenon, whose destabilizing effects seriously threaten international peace and security. The 2001 Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects set forth measures that were both realistic and appropriate, thereby laying the foundations for international cooperation and charting the course for common efforts based on solidarity.

Aware of the need to establish regional cooperation with regard to combating the illicit cross-border traffic in small arms, last April Algeria organized — with the cooperation of the Department for Disarmament Affairs and of other interested countries — a regional meeting on illicit trafficking in

light weapons. The holding of such a meeting attests to our commitment to the implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action and to encouraging the efforts of the international community in that regard.

**Mr. Udedibia** (Nigeria): On behalf of the African Group, I wish to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as the Chairman of the First Committee during the sixtieth session of the General Assembly. Through you, the African Group wishes also to convey its congratulations to the other members of the Bureau. The African Group has confidence in your ability to guide the affairs of the Committee to a successful conclusion. On behalf of the African Group, I assure you and the Bureau of our full support and cooperation in addressing the tasks ahead.

The African Group wishes to reiterate its commitment to the achievement of general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control. The Group believes in the need to pursue, and eventually attain, the goal of non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in all its aspects.

The Group welcomes the adoption of the outcome document (*resolution 60/1*) of the High-level Plenary Meeting, which was held in New York last month. However, the Group is disappointed that no agreement could be reached on the cluster dealing with the issue of disarmament and non-proliferation. The Group believes that further negotiations will be necessary to make progress in that area. We call on all delegations to demonstrate the necessary political will to enhance progress in that area.

The African Group remains convinced that nuclear weapons pose the greatest danger to humankind. The commencement of multilateral negotiations leading to an early conclusion of a convention prohibiting the development, production, testing, deployment, stockpiling, transfer, threat of use or use of nuclear weapons and on their total elimination has thus become a necessity. Among the first steps towards the realization of that objective should be a commitment by nuclear-weapon States to immediately stop the qualitative improvement, development, production and stockpiling of nuclear warheads and their delivery systems. Pending the total elimination of those weapons, a legally binding international instrument should be established under which nuclear-weapon States would undertake not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States. The African Group stresses the importance of ensuring that any nuclear disarmament process be irreversible, transparent and verifiable in order for it to be meaningful.

The African Group recognizes that the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament was a turning point in the history of multilateral efforts to achieve disarmament, in particular nuclear disarmament. The Group once again wishes to express its regret at the non-implementation of the Final Document of that session (*resolution S-10/2*) 27 years after it was adopted. The African Group underscores the need to convene a fourth special session devoted to disarmament in order to give real meaning to the nuclear disarmament process.

The African Group reaffirms its belief in the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) as a vital instrument in the maintenance of international peace and security. The Group endorses the 13 practical steps adopted at the 2000 NPT Review Conference for systematic and progressive efforts to implement the unequivocal commitment undertaken by the nuclear-weapon States to accomplish the total elimination of their arsenals, leading to nuclear disarmament in keeping with article VI of the Treaty. The Group wishes to express its regret at the failure of the 2005 NPT Review Conference to produce a meaningful outcome.

The African Group reiterates its long-standing support for the total elimination of all nuclear testing. The Group stresses the significance of achieving universal adherence to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), including by all nuclear-weapon States, which, among other things, should contribute to the process of nuclear disarmament. In that connection, the Group endorses the declaration adopted at the Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the CTBT which took place in New York from 21 to 23 September 2005. Pending the entry into force of the Treaty, it is important that the moratorium on nuclear-weapon test explosions or explosions of any other nuclear device be maintained. The Group welcomes the recent increase in the number of signatures and ratifications of the Treaty.

The African Group emphasizes the importance of strengthening existing multilateral arms control and disarmament agreements by ensuring full compliance

with, and effective implementation of, those agreements, including their universality.

The Group also reaffirms its strong belief in strengthening the existing disarmament machinery as a means of advancing the process of nuclear disarmament. In that connection, the Group expresses its deep disappointment at the continued failure of the Conference on Disarmament to begin substantive work. The Group calls on the Conference on Disarmament to agree on a work programme as soon as possible so that substantive negotiations can start.

The African Group reiterates its support for the concept of internationally recognized nuclear-weapon-free zones established on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among the States of the regions concerned. The Group further endorses the declaration adopted at the Conference of States Parties and Signatories to Treaties that Establish Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones held in Tlatelolco, Mexico, from 26 to 28 April this year. We call for the ratification of the Treaty of Pelindaba, on the establishment of an African nuclear-weapon-free zone, by the required number of States, so that it can enter into force without further delay.

The African Group calls on States to take appropriate measures to prevent any dumping of nuclear or radioactive wastes that would infringe on the sovereignty of States. In that regard, the Group recalls the 1991 resolution of the Council of Ministers of the Organization of African Unity regarding the Bamako Convention on the Ban of the Import into Africa and the Control of Transboundary Movement and Management of Hazardous Wastes within Africa. The Group also calls for the effective implementation of the International Atomic Energy Agency Code of Practice on the International Transboundary Movement of Radioactive Waste as a means of enhancing the protection of all States from the dumping of radioactive wastes on their territories.

The African Group wishes to restate its belief, as also recognized in the outcome document, in the full implementation of the 2001 United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects as a key element in promoting long-term security and for creating conditions for sustainable development in many developing countries, especially those in Africa. The Group made a significant contribution to the agreement reached last June on the final text of a draft international instrument on tracing illicit small arms and light weapons. That draft instrument will be introduced for action during the course of this session of the General Assembly.

Cognizant of the fact that illicit arms brokering plays a significant role in the trade in illicit arms, the African Group calls for the establishment of an effective international regime on brokering. The Group expresses its support for the establishment of a group of governmental experts towards that end.

To achieve the desired results, it is imperative that the international community deal with the threat posed by the illicit small arms trade in a comprehensive and action-oriented manner.

The African Group takes note of the First Review Conference of the Ottawa Convention on Anti-personnel Landmines, which took place in Nairobi from 29 November to 3 December 2004, and, in line with the outcome document, calls on States parties to the Convention fully to implement their obligations under the instrument.

**Mr. Maema** (Botswana): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the following member States of the Southern African Development Community: Angola, Botswana, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Lesotho, Madagascar, Mauritius, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Mr. Chairman, as I am speaking for the first time during this session of the First Committee, allow me to express my congratulations to you on your election as well as to the Bureau. We are fully confident that your extensive experience in dealing with disarmament and non-proliferation issues, both within the United Nations system and beyond, will serve the work of our Committee well. The member States of the Southern African Development Community assure you of their fullest support and cooperation.

The SADC member States align themselves with the statements delivered by Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and by Nigeria on behalf of the African Group. We also take this opportunity to condemn in the strongest possible terms Saturday's heinous terror attacks carried out in Bali, and we extend our condolences to, and commiserate with, the families of the deceased and the injured. SADC

reiterates its unequivocal condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, committed by whomever, wherever and for whatever purposes.

The SADC member States believe that there is a connection between disarmament and development. The SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security was established primarily because the region recognized that no socio-economic development could be achieved without the achievement of peace, security and political stability. SADC therefore drew up the Strategic Indicative Plan for the Organ to promote peace and security in the region. The Plan would safeguard the development of the region against instability and thus help implement the Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan, which provides member States with a coherent and comprehensive development agenda. The two exist side by side, as one seeks to ensure that an enabling environment is created for the achievement of the goals of the other.

Despite the demonstration in recent years of the political will of our member States to cooperate on political, defence and security matters, we still face potential and actual military threats within our region. Some of our States are still grappling with armed conflicts; unfinished demobilization, disarmament, reintegration and monitoring of former military personnel; terrorism; and the prevalence of illicit arms and landmines.

The SADC member States can thus broadly support the consideration by the Group of Governmental Experts of the relationship between disarmament and development on issues such as, inter alia, the pivotal role that security plays in defining the relationship between disarmament and development; the importance of addressing the multifarious threats to development posed by illicit small arms and light weapons; and the importance of preventing conflict in order to avoid the debilitating financial, economic and social costs associated with civil conflicts and with armed conflicts between States.

In that regard, SADC is also committed to the wider continental establishment and consolidation of the African Union as well as its institutions and programmes, such as the Peace and Security Council and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD).

The prevalence and proliferation in our societies of small arms and light weapons is one of the most negative factors affecting our economies and the sense of peace and security of our citizens. Our region is inundated with such weapons following many decades of inter- and intra-State conflicts in some of our States. As a region, we clearly have much cause for concern and have a clear incentive to arrest them (pp.)

SADC has been a strong advocate in the fight against that scourge. Internationally, in July 2001, SADC member States actively participated in the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons and in the adoption of the Programme of Action. At the continental level, SADC member States were instrumental in the development and adoption of the 2000 Bamako Declaration on an African Common Position on the Illicit Proliferation, Circulation and Trafficking of Small Arms and Light Weapons. Additionally, through our own Southern African Regional Police Chiefs Cooperation Organization, SADC prepared the Protocol on the Control of Firearms, Ammunition and Other Related Materials. The Protocol was adopted and signed at the Blantyre summit on 14 August 2001.

The contribution of such arms to high levels of instability, extended conflicts and social dislocation and their link to drug trafficking, terrorism, transnational organized crime and mercenary and other violent criminal activities is recognized by many SADC member States. There can be little doubt that combating the spread of such weapons can be achieved only through effective international cooperation and by developing strong mechanisms to exchange information, keeping records for effective tracking, considering the issue of proper marking of such weapons to guard against illegal ownership, and developing structures that would enable an expeditious response to tracing requests.

While SADC was disappointed that the Open-ended Working Group to negotiate an international instrument to enable States to identify and trace, in a timely and reliable manner, illicit small arms and light weapons could not agree on a legally binding instrument, we are, however, heartened that the politically binding instrument due to be presented to the sixtieth session of the General Assembly contains provisions that we feel will effectively combat their illicit trade.

We would like to urge the membership of the General Assembly to adopt the draft instrument and to

demonstrate the political will necessary to enact its provisions. Our disappointment at the failure to negotiate a legally binding instrument will not dampen our resolve to see this issue through to its natural conclusion.

Allow me briefly to comment on the issue of the implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction. The entire SADC membership is committed to the provisions of the Mine Ban Treaty, as we recognize the extraordinarily hazardous nature of these arms and their implications for innocent citizens. The SADC member States attach great importance to strong national and regional commitments. The African Common Position on Anti-personnel Landmines sends a powerful message as to the priority that the African region attaches to the implementation of those instruments. This is translated in our commitment to the non-use of anti-personnel landmines and the non-development, production, acquisition, stockpiling, retention or transfer, and destruction of all anti-personnel mines, in compliance with the Convention.

The SADC member States would like to take this opportunity to echo the disappointment expressed by the Secretary-General at the failure of our collective membership to agree on language on disarmament and non-proliferation in the World Summit Outcome document. History will not judge us kindly — and rightly so — for having failed to reach agreement on language on an issue of such magnitude. There should be no doubt that the potentially destructive impact of a nuclear explosion on our entire globe deserves at the very least some mention in such a document.

SADC believes that the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) represents the cornerstone of the disarmament and non-proliferation treaty regime and therefore calls for its universality. In that regard, we urge all parties to abide by all of the commitments contained in the decisions emanating from the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference and those contained in the Final Document of the 2000 NPT Review Conference.

The ongoing concerted efforts to combat terrorism, while necessary, should not deflect from the necessity for renewed and genuine efforts towards the implementation of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. SADC member States view the total elimination of nuclear weapons by nuclear-power States as the best safeguard against their acquisition by terrorists and against their use or threat of use against non-nuclear-power States. However, in lieu of their total elimination, we urge that nuclear-power States commit themselves to the conclusion of a legally binding instrument on security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States at the soonest.

SADC urges all negotiating partners to approach future discussions on disarmament and non-proliferation in good faith. The world community that we represent deserves more and should expect no less from us as custodians of this process. Any future report of the failures of the disarmament machinery can only bring us into further disrepute. That could represent a failure of apocalyptic proportions.

**Mr. Kumalo** (South Africa): Let me first extend my delegation's congratulations on your election to the chairmanship of the First Committee of the General Assembly during this very important sixtieth session. I wish to assure you of my delegation's full support and cooperation as you and your Bureau lead the work of the Committee to a successful conclusion.

I would like also to associate myself with the statements delivered by the delegation of Nigeria on behalf of the African Group and by the delegation of Botswana on behalf of the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

South Africa is gravely concerned by the general lack of meaningful progress on nuclear disarmament and the apparent paralysis in one of the major parts of the United Nations disarmament machinery, the Conference on Disarmament. The failure of the seventh Review Conference of Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the deadlock in the Conference on Disarmament are an indictment showing that we have not risen to the challenge posed by nuclear weapons. These impediments to nuclear disarmament are manifestations of a serious lack of political will to implement previously agreed nuclear disarmament commitments and undertakings. Equally, they depict our lack of courage to negotiate on certain core issues that would advance nuclear disarmament. South Africa believes that this state of affairs leaves us in a precarious situation offering questionable prospects for nuclear disarmament. Rather than dispelling this view, the inability of the recent General Assembly summit to

reach agreement on matters relating to nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation has entrenched it.

Despite this disappointing situation, South Africa continues to believe that progress on both nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation is required in order to attain the goal of a world free from nuclear weapons. Although this is not a new concept, South Africa strongly cautions against the tendency to place primary emphasis on one or the other of these aspects. If this tendency continues unabated, the pivotal role of the NPT as the essential foundation of nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation will be undermined. In this connection, South Africa strongly believes that, if we wish to make progress, it should be clear that all aspects of the NPT should be strictly implemented and enforced. Each article of the NPT remains binding on all States parties at all times and in all circumstances, and it is imperative that all States parties be held fully accountable for strict compliance with their obligations under the Treaty.

If we wish to make progress in the context of the Conference on Disarmament, it is imperative that we concentrate our efforts on reaching agreement on a programme of work for that body. It is beyond doubt that neither formal nor informal meetings of the Conference on Disarmament have thus far led us any closer to reaching agreement on a programme of work. Given this deadlock, South Africa continues to believe that the five ambassadors' proposal presents us with a good opportunity to achieve this goal, which has been elusive for the past eight years. It is time that there was increased, sharp focus in the Conference on Disarmament on the proposal.

In general, it is time that we found innovative ways of dealing with the lack of progress on nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation, as well as the paralysis prevailing in the United Nations disarmament machinery, in order to complement achievements made on small arms and light weapons and on anti-personnel mines.

South Africa continues to attach great importance to the implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All its Aspects. South Africa and Colombia, and Japan as coordinator, will this year again submit a draft resolution to address the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. We trust that all members will be able to join consensus on the draft resolution.

During 2005, South Africa actively participated in the second and third meetings of the Open-ended Working Group to Negotiate an International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace in a Timely and Reliable Manner Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons. In this regard, my delegation commends the Chairperson of the Open-ended Working Group, Ambassador Anton Thalmann of Switzerland, for his efforts to forge a consensus on the draft instrument. Like many other delegations, South Africa would have preferred a legally binding instrument; we also supported the inclusion of ammunition in the draft instrument.

That having been said, we nevertheless see the draft instrument as a positive development in the small arms and light weapons field. In our view, the 2006 Conference to Review Progress on small arms presents an important opportunity to further strengthen the international community's call for action on illicit small arms and light weapons. Naturally, South Africa will also follow future developments concerning the illicit brokering of small arms and light weapons with keen interest; we believe that we should adopt an ambitious approach in our collective endeavours to combat such activities.

The question of anti-personnel mines was an important issue for South Africa even before the entry into force of the Mine-Ban Convention in 1999. We therefore valued participation in the First Review Conference of the Convention, which was held in Nairobi, Kenya, in November and December last year and which adopted the Nairobi Action Plan 2005-2009. We view the Sixth Meeting of States Parties, to be later this year, as an opportunity to further highlight the importance of the Mine-Ban Convention and to accelerate its implementation and universalization with a view to achieving the vision of a world free from anti-personnel mines. As one of the Co-Chairs of the Standing Committee on the General Status and Operation of the Convention, South Africa continues to contribute to and facilitate the finalization of the anticipated outcome documents of the meeting.

In the area of biological weapons, we will continue to seek to strengthen the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention and believe that the 2006 Review

Conference could provide the vehicle for us to collectively move forward in this important area.

In conclusion, South Africa continues to believe that the only effective way of dealing with weapons of mass destruction is through established instruments in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation. Universal adherence to, full implementation of and compliance with these international agreements, and the complete elimination of all weapons of mass destruction, are the only guarantee against the threat of and use of these weapons.

**Mr. Hu Xiaodi** (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): First of all, Sir, please allow me to congratulate you on your election to the chairmanship of the First Committee at this session of the General Assembly. With your rich experience and outstanding diplomatic skills, you will surely guide the work of the Committee to success. You and the other members of the Bureau can rest assured of the full cooperation and support of the Chinese delegation. I would also like to express my sincere thanks to Ambassador De Alba of Mexico for his excellent work as Chairman of the Committee at the fifty-ninth session.

This year marks the sixtieth anniversary of victory in the world anti-fascist war, as well as of the founding of the United Nations. Reviewing the history of that war, written in blood and fire, remembering the solemn moment when the United Nations was founded and recalling the international community's endeavour to achieve peace and development over the past six decades, which have been full of twists and turns, we sincerely feel that peace is the fundamental precondition for human society to realize its goal of development. It can be achieved only through joint efforts and mutual cooperation by the peoples of all countries.

On the whole, the international situation has been stable, and we see an irresistible trend towards pursuing peace, seeking cooperation and promoting development. The phenomenon of a multipolar world marked by economic globalization, is intensifying, and science and technology are advancing by leaps and bounds. Exchanges, cooperation and interdependence among countries are ever on the rise, as are factors conducive to the maintenance of peace and averting war. Increasingly, countries are opting to strengthen cooperation and pursue common development. However, the world is far from tranquil, as traditional security threats persist and non-traditional security threats continue to emerge. This combination of traditional and non-traditional threats continues to hobble human development and threaten international peace and security.

Human societies have never before been so closely interconnected in their interests and destinies. At this important time in history, marked by both opportunities and challenges, all countries should work together with great solidarity to seize historic opportunities and address emerging global security threats.

As an important element of international efforts to pursue peace and promote development, the international arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation process is at a crucial juncture. On the one hand, the international arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation regime still plays an important role in maintaining international peace and stability. The majority of the multilateral arms control treaties have been implemented smoothly, and further progress has been achieved in some areas. Multilateral efforts to strengthen the effectiveness of the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological Weapons Convention have been further promoted. There has been remarkable progress in the field of arms control as it relates to humanitarian issues. The international consensus on preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction has been constantly strengthened. Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) is being implemented. A number of initiatives to strengthen non-proliferation regimes have been introduced, and political and diplomatic efforts have been steadily pursued to settle proliferation issues through dialogue and cooperation.

On the other hand, the multilateral arms control and disarmament process is faced with difficulties and challenges. There is still a long way to go in nuclear disarmament. The obsession with the cold war mentality and with a strategy of nuclear deterrence based on the first use of nuclear weapons, as well as such developments as lowering the threshold for the use of nuclear weapons and developing new nuclear weapons, are new factors for instability in international security. There is a growing danger of the militarization of outer space. The Conference on Disarmament in Geneva is still at a deadlock. The prospects for the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty remain vague. Negotiations

on a fissile material cut-off treaty and an international instrument on the prevention of an arms race in outer space have yet to be launched. This year's Review Conference of Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) ended without substantive results. No consensus was reached on arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation language for the outcome document of the recent United Nations summit. Multilateral arms control institutions are facing challenges. Some regional nuclear issues remain unsettled and there is a growing threat that terrorist groups and other non-State entities may acquire weapons of mass destruction.

It is the shared and imperative task of the international community to address these new threats and challenges, promote the healthy development of the international arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation process and build a new century of peace, justice, democracy and prosperity. To that end, the following measures should be fully implemented.

First, a new security concept centred on equality, mutual trust, mutual benefit and cooperation should be fostered. The world is like a big family where peaceful coexistence will lead to a win-win situation and where mutual cooperation will result in common security. Countries should build trust among themselves in the security field and should preserve regional and international security through mutually beneficial cooperation. The mentality of seeking security superiority through military power should be abandoned. Instead, disputes should be resolved through dialogue and stability should be achieved through cooperation.

Secondly, treaty regimes in the sphere of international arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation should be firmly preserved. As an important part of the international security framework, these are indispensable for maintaining international peace and stability. Because of the diversification of threats and the increase of unstable and unpredictable factors in the international security field, it is pragmatic and important to preserve and strengthen these regimes.

Thirdly, multilateral arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation efforts should be further strengthened. The role of nuclear weapons in national security should be reduced, and the international nuclear disarmament process should be promoted. In order to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, an integrated approach should be adopted to address both the symptoms and the root causes of the phenomenon. Precautionary measures should be taken to prevent the militarization of, and an arms race in, outer space. Further effective measures should be adopted to address humanitarian concerns in the context of arms control.

Fourthly, problems in the field of arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation should be resolved through political and diplomatic means within the existing framework of international law. Here, measures should be conducive to safeguarding international peace and security. Differences and disputes should be properly resolved through negotiation, dialogue and cooperation, instead of by resorting to pressure, sanctions or confrontation. A balance should be struck between arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation on the one hand and development on the other.

Fifthly, the path of multilateralism should be followed in achieving common security. In this regard, international cooperation should be strengthened and universal participation ensured. The history of the past 60 years has indicated that as the core of the collective security mechanism and the key forum for multilateralism, the United Nations has played an irreplaceable role in international cooperation to ensure global security. Such a role must only be strengthened and must not be weakened in any way.

The Chinese nation loves peace, and China is a responsible member of the international community. China has always adopted a highly responsible position in the international arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation field and has taken practical measures to promote international arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation. An outstanding example of such efforts is that over the past three years, China has actively promoted the six-party talks in Beijing on the Korean peninsula nuclear issue. During the fourth round of the talks, concluded just last month, the six parties achieved important consensus and released a joint statement. This marks a significant step forward for the talks and is attributable to the political commitment and hard work of all parties involved. It also reflects the common aspiration of the international community. This result should be safeguarded with great care, as it was not come by easily. We hope that all parties can continue to work

together to move forward the six-party talks and to seek a peaceful solution to this issue through dialogue, so as to ensure long-lasting peace and stability on the Korean peninsula and to achieve common development and prosperity. The Chinese Government will continue to make active contributions to that end.

On 1 September, the Chinese Government published a white paper on China's efforts in the area of arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation. It fully describes China's policies and efforts in this field. The white paper demonstrates that the policies and measures adopted by China in the field of arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation have been active, earnest and constructive. It also shows that China has always been a firm force in preserving world peace and promoting joint development and international cooperation.

**Mr. Abdelaziz** (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): I take great pleasure, Sir, in congratulating you on your election to the chairmanship of the First Committee at this important time in the work of the General Assembly. I would also like to congratulate the other members of the Bureau. In addition, I would like to endorse the statement made on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement by the representative of Indonesia and that made on behalf of the African Group by the representative of Nigeria today.

The sixtieth session of the General Assembly is taking place in an atmosphere that can be described, at best, as bleak, especially with regard to the issue of disarmament in all its dimensions. The current state of affairs augurs ill for the possibility that States will fulfil the voluntary commitments and obligations they entered into in a variety of multilateral frameworks. It opens the door for many, if not all, States to retract their commitments, and it foretells a bleak future for succeeding generations.

Since the Final Document (*resolution S-10/2*) of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, held in 1978, established the international community's priorities in the field of disarmament — with nuclear disarmament at the forefront followed by other weapons of mass destruction and conventional weapons — little has been achieved within the multilateral framework in those three areas. This is true despite some progress at the bilateral level, which has yet to be replicated at the international level and which falls short of meeting our common objectives.

Despite the indefinite extension of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) in 1995, which was part of a comprehensive package with which we are all familiar, there has been no tangible progress on nuclear disarmament; the universality of the Treaty has not been achieved; States parties, particularly the nuclear-weapon States, have not made any meaningful effort to achieve that universality; and, despite the possession by non-parties of opaque nuclear capabilities and even nuclear weapons, we are actually witnessing increased cooperation between those States and the nuclear-weapon States on a variety of nuclear activities, contrary to commitments under the NPT.

This raises a logical question. Are we, as nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon States, committed to the faithful and effective implementation of the Treaty, or are we not? What makes it even more difficult to answer this question — especially for us, the non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the Treaty — is that we are witnessing desperate efforts by nuclear-weapon States and their allies who benefit from their nuclear umbrella to expand the Treaty obligations of non-nuclear-weapon States by limiting those States' right of withdrawal; by hampering acquisition by non-nuclear-weapon States of nuclear materials and the technology necessary for the development of peaceful nuclear programmes in exercise of an inalienable right enshrined in the Treaty; by employing politicized multiple standards in addressing suspected cases of non-compliance; by excluding the multilateral frameworks that can best address these issues; and by invoking the universal application of additional protocols at a time when universality has not been achieved for the NPT or for comprehensive safeguards. All of this is taking place without the requisite attention to past lessons, especially in the case of Iraq.

A further destructive trend that runs counter to the premises of the NPT is the lack of political will on the part of the nuclear-weapon States to implement the 13 verifiable practical steps for nuclear disarmament in a multilateral framework, including the establishment of a subsidiary body of the Conference on Disarmament to address nuclear disarmament, the conclusion of an internationally verifiable fissile material cut-off treaty and the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). Regrettably, this is true even though the 13 steps and

other measures were endorsed in the 2000 NPT Review Conference outcome by a consensus that included the nuclear-weapon States.

Non-proliferation has not fared much better. Despite the desperate need for progress towards the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, which lay at the heart of the resolution on the Middle East adopted at the NPT Review and Extension Conference in 1995 and which constituted an essential element of the basis on which the NPT was extended indefinitely, as well as the relevant paragraphs final document of the 2000 NPT Review Conference, which will remain elusive unless Israel joins the NPT, we have only witnessed regression and reneging on the commitments regarding the Middle East. These commitments are based not only on the 1995 Review Conference resolution on the Middle East but also upon many others, including Security Council resolution 687 (1991), which stated in paragraph 14 that the elimination of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq was a step towards the establishment of a zone free of all such weapons in the Middle East. Are weapons of mass destruction to be prohibited for Iraq but lawful for others? Have the States concerned fulfilled their Treaty obligations or their obligations under the relevant Security Council resolutions in this respect? Has the Security Council implemented this part of resolution 687 (1991) as it worked intently to ensure the implementation of its resolution 1540 (2004)?

That was the context in which we witnessed the regrettable failure of the 2005 NPT Review Conference to agree on renewing the international commitments we undertook in 1995 and 2000. Additionally, we have just witnessed yet another failure, caused by sharp differences: the failure of our courageous attempt to assess and characterize the international handling of disarmament issues in the text of the outcome document (*resolution 60/1*) of the sixtieth-anniversary High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly. However, we must not view these failures as a sign of a collapsing international disarmament regime, but rather as a clear warning that the regime could erode if we, nuclear and non-nuclear weapon States alike, fail to take swift action to meet our commitments in a balanced, sincere and objective manner.

Fortunately, the absence of any substantive outcome at the 2005 NPT Review Conference preserved the international consensus reached in 1995 and fully reaffirmed in 2000; thus, we remain able to build upon that consensus gradually and without altering it.

We are in dire need of a new vision for addressing disarmament issues in a multilateral framework. The new vision must reaffirm our commitment to that framework and to preserving the credibility of the United Nations and our own credibility as Member States. We need consensus on that vision lest we see the total collapse of the NPT and of all collective international disarmament efforts. That will be the case especially if we persist in addressing nuclear disarmament merely through Security Council resolutions, which generally reflect the views of certain parties at the expense of the views of others.

The issue of conventional weapons is of increasing importance; on our list of priorities, these weapons come just behind weapons of mass destruction. In this context, Egypt attaches great importance to the direct impact of conventional weapons, particularly small arms and light weapons, on armed conflict between and within States, particularly in Africa. We recall our discussions during the Second Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, held in July 2005, and reaffirm the responsibility of all States to implement fully the Programme of Action at the national level and the responsibility of the international community to provide financial and technical support to countries, particularly developing countries, so that they can achieve the goals of the Programme of Action.

In this context, Egypt welcomes and looks forward to completion of the ongoing efforts aimed at enabling Member States to mark and trace, in a timely manner, illicit small arms and light weapons. To that end, Egypt contributed to the successful conclusion of the work of the Open-ended Working Group. A draft international instrument is before the General Assembly during this session and should become one of the elements necessary for the success of the 2006 review conference of the Programme of Action.

In conclusion, international efforts in the field of disarmament cannot succeed unless we effectively address the full range of issues in a multilateral framework rather than in a bilateral framework or

within the Security Council. Our efforts must also accord with the priorities we set and agreed during the first special session of the General Assembly on disarmament. We cannot accept the argument that transformation of the political and strategic landscape requires a change in those priorities. Nor can we accept the argument that the security situation and the international balance of power mandate a change in the way we view disarmament issues. That would certainly be a recipe for failure in implementing what we have previously agreed.

On that basis, Egypt will always support any collective effort aimed at addressing disarmament issues within a multilateral framework and will endeavour to strengthen the role of multilateral disarmament agreements with a view to attaining the peace and stability to which our world aspires.

**Mr. Seck** (Senegal) (*spoke in French*): I wish at the outset, Sir, to offer you the hearty congratulations of the delegation of Senegal on your election to the chairmanship of the First Committee and to wish you every success. You may be certain of Senegal's full support as you carry out your important work.

I should like also to state that my delegation associates itself with the statements made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and by the representative of Nigeria on behalf of the Group of African States.

Mankind is facing a serious and growing security deficit. If corrective measures are not taken urgently all the positive efforts being made every day for the well-being of mankind could be negated. The promotion of development will remain a vain endeavour unless we gain full control over the various threats that menace us. We must resolutely commit ourselves to face up to the threats to our collective security in a context of confidence and mutual respect.

Senegal considers that one of the first measures that need to be taken would be to break the deadlock in the bodies dealing with disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation. This deadlock was evidenced at the recent sessions of the Disarmament Commission and the Conference on Disarmament, as well as at the 2005 Review Conference of Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). More recently, we noted with regret that no mention was made of disarmament or non-proliferation in the outcome document (*resolution 60/1*) of the High-level Plenary Meeting held here from 14 to 16 September.

During the general debate at the sixtieth session of the General Assembly Senegal expressed the view, through its Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Cheikh Tidiane Gadio, that this deadlock was the result of skewed thinking by certain States that associates the possession of nuclear weapons with a political and strategic advantage. Mr. Gadio said that this was a negative and dangerous position, because it favours nuclear proliferation and forgets that the security of our global village is either universal or it is not.

The nuclear threat is indeed real. But we must not lose heart, because if we wish it, we can still have a world where the threat of weapons of mass destruction — whether nuclear, chemical or biological — has been eradicated forever. In that regard, Senegal welcomes the good atmosphere at the recent Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, held in New York from 21 to 23 September 2005. The entry into force of the Treaty would indeed represent considerable progress towards our common goal of eliminating the nuclear threat.

Likewise, we welcome the recent adoption by the Open-ended Working Group of a draft political instrument on the marking and tracing of small arms and light weapons (*A/60/88, annex*). It would, however, be very useful with a view to consolidating progress to adopt as soon as possible an instrument, preferably legal in nature, on the brokering of small arms. Early adoption of these two instruments would help eradicate the devastating effects of the illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons and lead to the same success in Africa and throughout the world as was achieved concerning the spread of anti-personnel mines.

Let us not be mistaken: the most ambitious programmes to support the development of Africa, including those set out during the recent High-level Plenary Meeting, might have limited impact if the weapons of death that fuel conflict are not controlled. I must once again stress the relevance of the relationship between disarmament and development, the subject of resolution 59/78, adopted by the General Assembly on 3 December 2004 upon the recommendation of the First Commission.

The current collective security situation obliges us, when referring to nuclear weapons, to mention the

possibility of those weapons falling into the hands of terrorists, who could indiscriminately attack innocent, defenceless victims.

As Senegal has recalled, no cause is just or good enough to justify terrorism and the massacre of innocent civilians. Recent attacks throughout the world are a painful reminder of the persistence of terrorism, which is an evil that can be eradicated only through the strong mobilization of the international community. We feel that it is more pertinent than ever before to recall that only multilateral cooperation can enable us to overcome this scourge. Multilateralism also remains the only way for us to succeed in the process of disarmament, arms control, non-proliferation and the search for solutions to related international security problems. For collective security cannot and must not be the concern of a few States or groups of States: the survival of all humankind depends on it.

In this respect, Senegal agrees that convening a fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament could provide a good opportunity for all Member States to consider the most critical aspects of international security and the disarmament process.

Along with its partners, Senegal is more committed than ever to making a positive contribution to the search for a more secure, peaceful and prosperous world.

**Mr. Jit** (India): Please accept, Sir, my delegation's warm congratulations on your election to the chairmanship of the First Committee. We are most happy to see you in that position, and assure you of our fullest support.

The failure last month to reach consensus on disarmament and non-proliferation issues at the 2005 world summit, which was reflected in the omission of those subjects from the outcome document (*resolution 60/1*), demonstrated our inability to grasp the gravity of existing and emerging threats to international security. It also highlighted the divergence in the interests and priorities of Member States on those two crucial issues, which have an important bearing on international peace and security.

The widening gap between perception and reality and the security interests and priorities of key States have paralysed the multilateral disarmament machinery. For eight successive sessions, the Conference on Disarmament has not conducted any substantive negotiations. The Disarmament Commission has, for two consecutive sessions, not been able to agree even on its agenda.

There is a deep connection between the deficient functioning of the disarmament machinery and the decline of the multilateral ethic in international relations. We need multilateralism for progress on disarmament and non-proliferation because it is inclusive in seeking to build and expand common ground, and also because it is democratic in accommodating the priorities and interests of all. Multilateralism is even more relevant today, with the imperatives of an increasingly globalized economy, the emerging knowledge society and the resulting indivisibility of peace and stability.

It would be wrong to locate the current stalemate in the disarmament machinery in its procedures. By doing so we are addressing only the symptom, not the cause. The decision-making process in the Conference on Disarmament is not dysfunctional. There is nothing intrinsically wrong with it; rather it is a reflection of the lack of adequate political will. If it were indeed dysfunctional, we would not have succeeded in negotiating and concluding the Chemical Weapons Convention. That Convention, which provides for the verifiable elimination of an entire class of weapons of mass destruction, is a model of a truly non-discriminatory instrument. When we deal with issues that directly or indirectly impinge upon the security interests of States, it is only through an inclusive multilateral process of building consensus that States can be assured that their basic security interests will not be compromised. Specific national positions can be both protected and reconciled for the common security interests of all through such a process.

Resorting to ad hoc mechanisms or processes will not lead to any breakthrough; rather, it may weaken institutions like the Conference on Disarmament and the Disarmament Commission, which we are very much committed to preserve and strengthen. In this delicate period there should be every effort to strengthen existing multilateral disarmament processes and institutions.

The First Committee bears the immense responsibility of seeking convergence on views and approaches regarding key disarmament and international security issues. Through interactive dialogue we can develop a better understanding of one

another's security concerns and priorities and expand common ground. We also hope that through our discussions we will be able to build upon the strength of existing multilateral disarmament machinery to increase its effectiveness for our collective good rather than despair that the current situation is without remedy.

India firmly believes in the continued validity of multilateral approaches. We believe that multilaterally negotiated and legally binding instruments provide the best mechanism to deal with disarmament and arms control issues. It is our view that diplomatic perseverance, in preference to conflict and confrontation, works the best when we deal with issues of peace and security.

The issue of nuclear weapons continues to be central to our work. The Programme of Action adopted by consensus at the first session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (see *resolution S-10/2*), which accorded primacy to nuclear disarmament, remains valid even today. It has been India's consistent view that the threat posed by nuclear weapons can be eliminated only through their total elimination in a progressive and systematic manner. India has called for the highest priority to be given to global and non-discriminatory nuclear disarmament and, with a view to the realization of that objective, has presented a number of initiatives over the years, including the very detailed and comprehensive 1988 action plan based on the principles of universality, non-discrimination and a balance of obligations for the phased elimination of all nuclear weapons within a time-bound framework. As recently as 29 July, our Prime Minister, Mr. Manmohan Singh, reiterated in Parliament that India's commitment to work for universal nuclear disarmament would remain our core concern.

We believe that nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation are interlinked and mutually reinforcing. Only the total elimination of nuclear weapons will provide the assurance that there will be no further proliferation of nuclear weapons. At the same time, addressing growing proliferation concerns in an inclusive manner consistent with the United Nations Charter and international law will reinforce the commitment to, and facilitate the achievement of, the goal of nuclear disarmament. Today the non-proliferation framework remains beset with crises. To address that it is necessary for nuclear-weapon States to reaffirm their commitment to nuclear disarmament. It is also necessary for all States to implement fully and in good faith the obligations they have accepted.

While pursuing the goal of nuclear disarmament, there is a need to take immediate interim steps to reduce the nuclear danger, including such measures as the de-alerting of nuclear weapons. There is also an urgent need to adjust nuclear doctrines to a posture of no-first-use and non-use against non-nuclear-weapon States. India's nuclear posture is characterized by responsibility, predictability and a defensive orientation. That is reflected in India's declared policy of no-first-use and non-use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States.

India has an abiding interest in the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, not just for its own security but also for the peace and security of the world at large. In fact, our security environment has been adversely affected due to the inability of the existing non-proliferation framework to effectively deal with proliferation.

India fully shares the concerns of the international community regarding the growing danger of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, including the alarming possibility that terrorists may acquire such weapons and resort to their use to cause devastation and terror on a large scale. It was because of that shared concern that in 2002 India introduced the draft resolution entitled "Measures to prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction", which was subsequently adopted by consensus as resolution 57/83.

In the past year India has actively participated in various multilateral efforts to deal with the possible linkages between terrorism and weapons of mass destruction, including in the diplomatic conference to amend the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material as well as in efforts regarding the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism and the Regional Radiological Security Partnership. In that context, we welcome the call by the Secretary-General for the early entry into force of the Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism.

India remains conscious of the responsibilities deriving from the possession of advanced technologies, both civilian and strategic, and is determined to ensure that those technologies do not fall into the wrong

hands, whether they be the hands of State or non-State actors. India has never been a source of proliferation of sensitive technologies and related materials or equipment. Our record in that regard has been unblemished. We have established a comprehensive system of export controls that is continuously reviewed and updated and is in line with global standards.

As a reflection of India's abiding commitment to non-proliferation — in addition to a corpus of existing legislation dealing with activities of direct or indirect relevance to weapons of mass destruction, their means of delivery and related equipment and technology — India has recently enacted overarching and integrated legislation, namely, the Weapons of Mass Destruction and Their Delivery Systems (Prohibition of Unlawful Activities) Act. That important legislative action, which was promulgated in June of this year, builds on the existing system of export controls.

It is our view that, if the emerging proliferation challenges are to be effectively addressed, the international community should review the existing framework to better adapt it to current threats and challenges and to existing realities while not hampering cooperation in the area of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy with States whose non-proliferation records are beyond doubt. States need to show the requisite political will to deal with those challenges in a forthright manner and not adopt an inconsistent approach, as we have witnessed in the past. As a mature and responsible nuclear Power, India remains ready to engage, on the basis of equality and consistent with the requirements of its national security, in all multilateral consultations to develop such a framework.

India is committed to meet the expanding need for energy due to our growing economy and the imperatives of social development, as well as to ensure our energy security in the future. We are resolved to develop nuclear energy as an important component of our overall energy basket. Our goal is to generate at least 20,000 megawatts of nuclear power by the year 2020. The development of nuclear energy will reduce pressure on oil prices and provide a clean and environmentally sustainable alternative to fossil fuels.

There are immense opportunities for international collaboration in the development of nuclear power. We appreciate the decision of some key States to cooperate with India in the endeavour to develop our nuclear-power generation capacity. We are engaged in constructive dialogue with the international community to find ways to facilitate international collaboration in the development of nuclear power.

In the interest of time, we have not addressed all the issues on our agenda. We propose to cover them during the thematic debate and in other interventions. In the meanwhile, we look forward to working together with other delegations to make this session of the First Committee truly productive.

**Mr. Al-Shamsi** (United Arab Emirates) (*spoke in Arabic*): On behalf of the delegation of the United Arab Emirates, I have the great pleasure of beginning my statement by congratulating you, Sir, on your election to the chairmanship of this important Committee. We are confident that, given your valuable diplomatic skills, you will ably lead our deliberations on the global disarmament issues before us. We wish you and the other members of the Bureau every success.

I would like also to thank your predecessor for his commendable management of the Committee during the previous session, as well as Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs and his Department for their valuable contributions to developing new mechanisms to enhance international cooperation in the areas of disarmament and international peace and security.

I also wish to convey our deep sympathy and condolences to the Government and the people of Indonesia and to the families of the victims of the terrorist bombings that took place in Bali recently.

I associate myself with the statement made by the representative of Malaysia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Despite the important and valuable accomplishments of the United Nations in the area of containing conflict and military confrontation in many regions of the world over the past few years, the ongoing arms race continues to pose a grave threat to international stability and economic security to which we all aspire in the new millennium. Moreover, recent studies and reports have revealed that annual world military expenditures now exceed $1 trillion. That has contributed to the world's fears concerning declared and undeclared programmes carried out by some States to develop or build nuclear weapons and regarding the fact that irresponsible parties having been permitted

access to such weapons. This situation requires that we fundamentally strengthen international cooperation in the area of disarmament in accordance with the principles of international law, the Charter of the United Nations, General Assembly and Security Council resolutions and the relevant United Nations treaties and conventions — none of which differentiate among States or peoples, calling instead for transparency, respect for State sovereignty and national and regional security, non-interference in the internal affairs of States and the right to legitimate self-defence.

The United Arab Emirates is disappointed with the outcome document (*resolution 60/1*) of the High-level Plenary Meeting which took place at the opening of the sixtieth session of the General Assembly, for its failure to refer to the commitments of States regarding the disarmament of nuclear-weapon States, entered into at the 2000 Millennium Summit. That situation is a reflection of the international community's failure to harmonize its views on key issues taken up at the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which was held last May, and of its inability to reach consensus on the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament at Geneva. We therefore call upon the members of this important Committee to demonstrate the flexibility and political will necessary to assume their responsibilities and to harmonize their views on pending disarmament issues.

We also wish to note that attempts by non-nuclear-weapon States to produce or acquire weapons of mass destruction — particularly in such areas of conflict as the Middle East, the Arabian Gulf region and South Asia — pose a serious threat to regional and international peace and security, heighten tensions among States and undermine confidence-building measures. The United Arab Emirates, which has acceded to disarmament treaties regarding weapons of mass destruction, therefore calls for strengthening stability- and confidence-building measures among States. We also urge the relevant States to reconsider their positions vis-à-vis such weapons, exercise balanced self-restraint and resort to peaceful means to resolve regional conflicts. In that regard, we would like to emphasize the importance of the following.

First, nuclear-weapon States should comply fully with commitments under treaties and protocols regarding disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. They should work to gradually reduce the number of such weapons in a time-bound manner and limit their use of nuclear technology to the peaceful purposes, consistent with article VI of the NPT.

Secondly, the international community must respond to proposals calling for the formulation of unconditional international instruments that ensure the security of non-nuclear-weapon States and affirm their legitimate right to utilize nuclear power for peaceful purposes.

Thirdly, we must reaffirm the universality and inclusiveness of treaties pertaining to disarmament in the area of weapons of mass destruction, including the NPT. The international community should call upon States that have not yet acceded to such treaties to do so as soon as possible.

Fourthly, we must strengthen international efforts to prevent the illicit weapons trade. We welcome the international consensus reached recently on a draft international political instrument enabling States to identify and trace, in a timely manner, small arms and light weapons. We hope that the General Assembly will adopt the draft instrument in the near future and that all States will take the necessary steps to ensure its early and effective implementation.

Finally, we once again underscore the importance of strengthening international efforts aimed at establishing zones free from weapons of mass destruction, particularly in the Middle East in accordance with the resolution adopted at the 2000 NPT Review Conference and relevant resolutions of the General Assembly. In the meantime, States with influence must compel Israel to dismantle its nuclear facilities and place them under International Atomic Energy Agency inspections and safeguards. In addition, given the negative impact on the Middle East peace process and in order to guarantee the safety and security of the peoples of the region, we call upon all States to suspend all scientific and financial assistance to Israel that is being used to develop its nuclear facilities.

In conclusion, I express the hope that the First Committee's deliberations will lead to a convergence of views on how to strengthen the Committee's work and achieve the aspirations of our peoples to peace, security, development and regional and international stability.

**Mr. Shein** (Myanmar): On behalf of the delegation of Myanmar, and on my own account, I have great pleasure in extending our warmest congratulations to you, Sir, on your election to the chairmanship of the First Committee. We are confident that, under your wise and able guidance, we will achieve fruitful results in our work. I should also like to pay tribute, on behalf of my delegation, to the other members of the Bureau. I assure you, Mr. Chairman, of our full cooperation as you discharge your responsibilities.

My delegation would like to join other delegations in expressing condolences on the loss of life and property resulting from the recent terrorist attacks in Bali, Indonesia.

We associate ourselves fully with the statement made in the Committee yesterday by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the countries of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM).

The world today is beset with a host of security issues threatening the very existence of humankind as never before. The threats challenging us cannot be met by one nation alone, or by a group of nations. We need urgently to mobilize the resources and concerted efforts of the international community as a whole to face those challenges and to find ways and means to overcome them.

The existence and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction certainly constitute a grave threat facing humankind. Compounded by terrorism, that threat renders the world security environment highly vulnerable. With regard to weapons of mass destruction, we believe that nuclear disarmament should be accorded the highest priority on the international arms control and disarmament agenda. Major terrorist attacks occurred recently against London's public transport system. One could easily imagine a terrifying scenario anywhere in the world if weapons of mass destruction — and particularly nuclear weapons — were to fall into the possession of terrorists. It is incumbent upon all of us to strengthen our resolve and our efforts to deal with these horrendous threats to international peace and security.

Against that backdrop of the international security climate, we are deeply frustrated and disappointed at the failure of the 2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) to achieve substantive results, as well as at the lack of reference to disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation in the outcome document of the High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly (*resolution 60/1*). We hope that that will not be construed as loss of interest by the international community in that important issue.

Myanmar has consistently maintained that the two processes of nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation are interrelated and mutually reinforcing. However, much to our regret, the 2005 NPT Review Conference revealed that a wide and deep gap exists between nations that possess nuclear weapons and nations that have decided against the nuclear option. In our view, nuclear-weapon States should, and must, honour their unequivocal undertaking, declared at the 2000 NPT Review Conference, to achieve the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals. The will to fulfil that unequivocal undertaking has yet to be demonstrated by fully implementing the 13 practical steps identified by the Conference.

For the past 10 years, Myanmar has introduced in this body comprehensive draft resolutions on nuclear disarmament reflecting the views of the majority of the countries of the NAM. This year will be no exception, and we shall again introduce at the First Committee a draft resolution on nuclear disarmament. We sincerely express the hope that it will be supported by an overwhelming majority of Member States.

Myanmar has always stressed the importance of achieving universal adherence to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and the NPT. Although the CTBT's entry into force is still far from being a reality, we are pleased and encouraged to observe that the number of States to have ratified the Treaty has now grown to 125. In that regard, we welcome the convening of the 2005 Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the CTBT in New York to coincide with the 2005 summit.

I should now like to highlight another issue that potentially has serious implications for the peace and security of the world at large. I am referring to the issue of prevention of an arms race in outer space, which is a core issue of the Conference on Disarmament. At present, we may reasonably assume that outer space is still pristine. However, the current status of outer space will soon be confronted by a potential security threat, that of an arms race by those nations that technologically and financially can afford

to wage one. Such a situation will bring about serious negative consequences for humankind. Myanmar therefore believes that every nation is a stakeholder on that issue. The use of outer space by nations, whether for peaceful purposes or otherwise, concerns every country.

Myanmar has consistently supported and sponsored the draft resolutions on that subject that have been introduced annually by Egypt and Sri Lanka in recent years. There is pressing need to negotiate and conclude as soon as possible a legally binding international instrument to prevent the weaponization of outer space, as existing instruments are inadequate to comprehensively cover the issue. Myanmar supports such a move by the Conference on Disarmament. We welcome and support the recent initiatives of China and the Russian Federation in the Conference on Disarmament towards the realization of such a treaty.

While Myanmar attaches great importance to the question of weapons of mass destruction, we also recognize the danger posed to human populations around the world by small arms and light weapons. Those weapons inflict serious casualties upon hundreds of thousands of people each year. We therefore welcome the fruitful results of the second Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, which was held in New York in July. We hope that the draft international instrument to enable States to identify and trace in a timely and reliable manner illicit arms and light weapons will be adopted at this session of the General Assembly. Myanmar, along with the other States members of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), will work together at the regional and international levels to bring about the effective implementation of the Programme of Action.

Let me now turn to the work of the Conference on Disarmament. My delegation notes with regret that member States have been unable to agree on a programme of work for the Conference. We sincerely express the hope that the parties concerned will demonstrate their commitment to the process of disarmament and exercise the political will to overcome the impasse. However, we would like to express our appreciation to the successive Presidents of the Conference on Disarmament in 2005, who conducted intensive consultations and attempted various initiatives with a view to reaching consensus on a programme of work, including by convening formal and informal plenary meetings and interactive sessions on agenda issues and other matters relevant to the international security climate.

We are grateful to the Norwegian presidency for having convened four structured plenary meetings focusing on the four core issues of the agenda, thereby enabling an assessment of the convergence and divergence of views held by Member States. It is our hope that those structured plenary meetings will provide impetus towards the attainment of the desired objective.

In conclusion, despite the impasse in the work of the Conference on Disarmament and the failure of the 2005 NPT Review Conference, we must not let our resolve be weakened by this negative trend. Instead, we must work constructively with renewed determination and the political will to address the legitimate security concerns of the international community.

**Mr. Meléndez-Barahona** (El Salvador) (*spoke in Spanish*): I am speaking on behalf of Ambassador César Martínez Flores, Deputy Permanent Representative of El Salvador.

I should like at the outset to convey to you, Sir, the congratulations of the Government of El Salvador on your election to preside over the work of the First Committee. We are sure that you will be able to successfully carry out that work with the help of all the delegations represented here.

In addition, we join in the expressions of condolence to the Government and the people of Indonesia on the terrorist attacks recently committed on their territory.

The Government of El Salvador shares the views expressed by the representative of Argentina on behalf of the Rio Group. In particular, we reiterate our concern at the omission of the issue of disarmament in the outcome document (*resolution 60/1*) of September's High-level Plenary Meeting. We believe that that omission contributes nothing to multilateralism or to the strengthening of the Organization. On the contrary, it threatens to undermine the values and principles that we work to uphold day after day.

It is therefore our challenge to correct that terrible omission and to meet the international

community's expectations regarding an issue of such major importance as disarmament and non-proliferation. We are convinced that multilateralism is and will continue to be the only way to maintain international peace and security and to discuss and find viable solutions to the problems of disarmament and non-proliferation in all their aspects.

Although there are concerns at all levels regarding those issues, I call attention to the concerns of small States such as mine. As we tackle those issues, we are assailed by the enormous complexity of finding solutions to them.

In that connection, the relationship between disarmament and development is of particular interest to our countries. Having inherited civil wars and related problems, we face the great task of eliminating the huge quantity of illicit weapons still in circulation, which discourage national and foreign investment, threaten safety in the workplace and are an additional financial burden for businesses. Therefore, as we discuss disarmament, small States such as mine are discussing our progress, our development and our survival.

In that connection, we welcome the holding of the Second Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, which made it possible to review actions taken to face the grave threat represented by the illicit trade in such weapons.

In El Salvador, we now have a law to monitor and regulate weapons, ammunition, explosives and similar devices and laws regulating the use, manufacture, import, export and sale of firearms, ammunition, explosives and similar devices; the stockpiling, transport, possession and carrying of ammunition; and the operation of firing ranges.

To curb those problems, we are carrying out reforms in our penal code establishing prison sentences for the crimes of possessing, carrying or using firearms, in order to limit their illicit circulation and provide greater security for citizens. A successfully executed idea — which we believe should be discussed further when we consider agenda item 97 (k), entitled "Assistance to States for curbing the illicit traffic in small arms and collecting them" — is the programme to exchange consumer goods for firearms, developed by the Patriotic Movement against Crime. In a four-year period, the programme enabled us to destroy nearly 7,975 firearms, including weapons held privately by members of the armed forces, and 134,405 pieces of military equipment, including ammunition, magazines, mines, detonators and explosives. Moreover, the programme "Firearms not even as toys", under the auspices of the local office of the United Nations Development Programme, raised the awareness of parents and children about this issue.

All of that has provided us with means and possibilities, within the limits of our resources and with the help of friendly countries, to make progress in the fight against the illicit weapons trade. However, if we are to continue carrying out such positive and successful campaigns, we must have the firm support of the international community.

In Central America, we have not avoided the task of eradicating anti-personnel mines. To the contrary, all affected countries are committed to it. But, if we are to totally eradicate mines, it is essential to strengthen comprehensive action against them to supplement efforts already carried out. In addition, caring for the survivors of accidents caused by anti-personnel mines is of equal or greater importance.

Since our internal conflict, we have promoted, as part of our rehabilitation efforts, programmes aimed at physical and psychological rehabilitation, at enabling people to resume productive lives and at providing land, agricultural equipment, technical advice on how to develop small or family businesses and training in skilled trades for ex-combatants and those disabled by war and other causes, aimed at enabling them to improve their living conditions.

With regard to demining, on 20 February 2003, as a result of the general disarmament policy promoted in El Salvador, the Ministry of National Defence destroyed the last 5,248 anti-personnel mines in its possession. The programme was carried out with the Government's own funds. It left only 96 mines for training in mine deactivation, which is provided for in the Ottawa Convention.

Although many countries, such as mine, have cleared minefields and destroyed mine stockpiles, much remains to be done in the area of providing the necessary support to surviving victims of anti-personnel mines. Here, the international community,

and particularly the donor countries, have an important role to play.

At the regional level, within the framework of the Central American Integration System and regional cooperation, the Central American Security Commission — a body of the Framework Treaty on Democratic Security in Central America — has agreed that the region's police institutions shall be focal points for exchanging information about illicit arms trafficking — particularly information about producers, exporters, importers and authorized sellers — and for following up on and responding to the illicit trade. In addition, the Central American Police Chiefs Commission has designed a police statistics system for Central America and the Caribbean to improve the exchange of information on illicit arms trafficking, among other crimes.

Likewise, we believe it is important — in parallel with national efforts to effectively fight the illicit weapons trade and to improve the controls over the importation, exportation and legal sale of weapons — to obtain training and technical assistance for national institutions responsible for fighting, suppressing, registering and controlling firearms in our countries.

In conclusion, we join in the appeal made by other nations and regional groups to the effect that, if we are to make progress in our work, we need a high dose of political will. Mr. Chairman, you can count on the full cooperation of my Government.

**Mr. Kupiecki** (Poland): First of all, Sir, let me join previous speakers in congratulating you on your election to the chairmanship and in wishing you a successful and effective mandate.

The European Union statement made yesterday by the representative of the United Kingdom fully reflects Poland's position regarding the subjects on our agenda. I shall therefore limit myself to presenting Poland's views on several developments in the sphere of non-proliferation and disarmament as they pertain to weapons of mass destruction.

The cooperative efforts of the United Nations must remain at the very centre of our common security strategy for the twenty-first century, because many prognoses indicate greater instability in the years ahead. We can expect more terrorism, which is driven not by any clear political aim but by the desire to cause as much death and destruction as possible. The recent events in Bali are yet another sad reminder of these new and terrible risks.

Likewise, we must expect more proliferation. The spread of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) will be a terrifying amplifier of other risks and threats. Weapons of increasing range and destructive power are coming into the possession of a growing number of States and non-State actors, including terrorists. If these assumptions are correct, than all Members of the United Nations must be ready to take consistent and coherent non-proliferation action, using all measures at their disposal under international law and national regulations. There is a sense of urgency and a need for concentrated effort on the part of all States in this field. Such efforts must remain an indispensable part of any comprehensive security strategy for the years to come.

Bearing in mind the growing danger of the proliferation of WMDs and their means of delivery, one has to underscore the need for all Member States to implement the international disarmament agreements and standards in the field of non-proliferation. Such adherence is clearly binding on all United Nations Members through the power of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004). In that respect, the effective functioning of the United Nations security and disarmament machinery is equally important. Poland, as a member of the European Union, underlines the importance of multilateral treaty regimes as the preferred way of dealing with non-proliferation.

The evolution of multilateral non-proliferation regimes and the development of new forms of such regimes are evidence of adaptation; more coherence and effectiveness are called for in this field. There are several new initiatives aimed at countering the proliferation threat, such as the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI), known also as the Krakow Initiative; the Group of Eight (G-8) Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction; the Cooperative Threat Reduction Programme; and the Hague Code of Conduct Against Ballistic Missile Proliferation. Those initiatives focus on internationally, regionally and nationally oriented activities and contribute to implementation of the goals set by the traditional non-proliferation instruments. I wish to refer specifically to the Krakow Initiative — the PSI — which builds worldwide awareness of the danger posed by WMDs and helps in promoting and developing practical responses. It also gives impetus to a more dynamic and proactive approach to prevent the

proliferation of WMDs, their means of delivery and related technologies.

The threats imposed by WMD proliferation, to which no State is immune, point to the need to reflect seriously on the functioning of the disarmament machinery. We should spare no effort in forging a new global disarmament and non-proliferation consensus.

There is a need for a comprehensive review of the existing negotiating machinery and for reviving the non-proliferation and disarmament regimes. The Polish Foreign Minister, Mr. Adam Daniel Rotfeld, recently suggested that a group of experts to oversee the efforts of existing regimes could be established under the auspices of the United Nations. Also, a respected independent international research centre could be requested to prepare a report with recommendations on how to transform the existing United Nations institutions and mechanisms into more effective, operational and efficient bodies. Poland is ready to further contribute to this process and to the overall discussion concerning the condition of the global disarmament and non-proliferation machinery.

In developing our thinking on the role of the United Nations and its bodies, including the First Committee, the Conference on Disarmament, the Disarmament Commission and other relevant international instruments, it is important to consider whether their agendas respond adequately to the security threats and challenges. We see those bodies as complementary. Poland will support all efforts aimed at strengthening those bodies and their working methods to ensure better understanding, better cooperation and more result-oriented approaches.

Poland will chair the Conference on Disarmament in January 2006. As the birthplace of many important disarmament initiatives, Poland will take that opportunity to invigorate discussions on how to overcome the stalemate in the Conference on Disarmament. We hope to give the Conference an opportunity to address issues that are key to halting the erosion of its credibility.

Poland strongly believes that, at a time of security uncertainties, the work of the First Committee will enhance cooperative efforts and will increase the capability of all States to act together. This will be our contribution to a new comprehensive non-proliferation strategy and to world stability and security.

**Mr. Najib** (Iraq) (*spoke in Arabic*): My delegation is pleased to join other countries in congratulating you, Sir, on your election as Chairman of the First Committee. We wish you complete success in guiding our deliberations. I assure you and the other members of the Bureau that we will participate constructively in the formulation of recommendations and decisions that can be the subject of agreement among all delegations. I also wish to associate myself with the statement made yesterday by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

My delegation notes that our agenda deals with items closely related to the purposes and principles of the Charter and to the concerns and interests of member States. We are cognizant of the threats and dangers that the peoples and States of the world are facing domestically, regionally and internationally. Those threats and dangers aim at disrupting peace, stability, sustainable development and security; they fuel hatred, suspicion and the arms race, and they increase tension and violence. They do not promote tolerance, transparency, trust, cooperation, mutual responsibility and respect for international instruments and agreements. If such international instruments, commitments and obligations cannot attain credibility, but are instead a source of disruption, then the present situation could provide a premise for confrontation.

There is no doubt that proliferation breeds proliferation. Lack of trust and transparency gives rise to suspicion, tension and interference in the internal affairs of States and the temptation to acquire conventional and non-conventional weapons. The genuine interest of the international community lies in preserving international peace. We therefore need to implement non-proliferation, arms reductions and disarmament, for a world without controls is a more dangerous world. The same holds for individual regions.

The Middle East region is confronting a genuine security problem. We are far removed from solid peace, and we are facing the proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons and missiles. This is a source of real concern. Even worse, terrorism is spreading in its most atrocious forms and in the most appalling manner, as are fanaticism and extremism.

The new Iraq reaffirms its commitment to and its obligations under international treaties and agreements

on non-proliferation and disarmament. We are giving in-depth consideration to accession to treaties and conventions to which we are not yet parties, and we will actively cooperate and work towards helping rid the Middle East of all weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems. Like other members, we will submit draft resolutions in the hope that they will meet expectations and the challenges ahead.

Our country is facing the most atrocious forms of terrorism, and we will strive hard and with great confidence to rebuild a new Iraq that can take its place among the family of civilized nations, while benefiting from its past history and lessons learned. We want Iraq to regain hope. That would be a positive factor for stability, progress, tolerance and prosperity for us, for our neighbours and mankind as a whole.

**Mrs. Holguín** (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, and the other members of the Bureau on your election to preside over our deliberations. Colombia acknowledges your country's commitment to general and complete disarmament in all its aspects.

My delegation associates itself with the statements of condolence directed at the people of Indonesia in connection with the terrorist attacks perpetrated in recent days.

We also associate ourselves with the statements made yesterday by the representative of Argentina, on behalf of the Rio Group, and the representative of Indonesia, on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM).

The recent High-level Plenary Meeting has revealed the worrisome trend in disarmament. The lack of concrete recommendations on disarmament and non-proliferation in the outcome document adopted by heads of State and Government at the meeting (*resolution 60/1*) reflects the difficulties faced by multilateralism in this field, and follows other recent failures such as last May's Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the suspension of the work of the Disarmament Commission in June 2005.

Nevertheless, despite what would at first sight appear not to be an encouraging situation, Colombia reiterates its confidence in multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation, which has resulted in conventions and treaties of crucial importance to international peace and security. My country would therefore like to urge that the First Committee regain the political role entrusted to the General Assembly by the Charter of the United Nations.

The scourge of terrorism continues to spread throughout the world. It is important that we intensify efforts and policies to combat it. Achieving comprehensive disarmament and non-proliferation is a very important part of those efforts. Terrorism can be thwarted through, among other things, the complete elimination of weapons of mass destruction to ensure that they do not fall into the hands of terrorists. In that connection, and although Colombia understands the concerns of the international community as reflected in the adoption of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), my country also believes that disarmament and non-proliferation should go hand in hand: they are two sides of the same coin, namely, international peace and security.

The illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons continues to be a determining factor in the world's conflicts. Colombia regrets that the draft instrument on the marking and tracing of small arms and light weapons agreed upon in June by the Open-ended Working Group is not legally binding and does not cover ammunition. Only through real commitment on the part of all countries will it be possible to combat this scourge at the various stages of manufacture, distribution and diversion to illicit trade. As one of the countries most affected by the illicit arms trade, Colombia once again reiterates the need to exercise greater and more effective control over the world arms trade.

The second Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, which took place in New York last July, was an opportunity to get detailed information about the experiences of countries in implementing the Programme of Action, which establishes the general framework guiding the efforts of States in addressing each aspect of the problem.

However, despite the progress made, it was clear that the national reports presented at the Biennial Meeting did not cover areas requiring greater attention, such as the enormous number of arms in circulation,

the humanitarian impact of the abuse of firearms and the need for increased financing and support for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes. Nor did the reports cover areas that could not be included in the Programme of Action, such as regulating civilian possession of weapons and arms transfers to non-State actors.

In that regard, it is essential that we reflect — and, above all, take action — so that at the first review conference of the Programme of Action, to be held in July 2006, we can make concrete progress in those areas and develop methods of work and follow-up mechanisms that enable us, working with non-governmental organizations to translate words into deeds in order to combat this scourge that truly threatens peace and security and the well-being of our peoples.

My country has acceded to all existing international instruments regarding weapons of mass destruction, of which nuclear weapons are undoubtedly the most destructive. Nuclear disarmament is therefore a fundamental pillar in the overall field of disarmament.

Just a few weeks ago, the Fourth Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) provided a timely exchange of experiences among States signatories and States parties. My country, which signed the CTBT on the very day it was opened for signature in 1996, hopes that we will soon find a solution to the constitutional difficulties impeding us from ratifying the Treaty at present. We hope that States will be receptive to the proposal we made at the Conference with regard to achieving the desired universalization of the Treaty.

My delegation hopes that the substantive session of the Open-ended Working Group to consider the objectives and agenda, including the possible establishment of the preparatory committee, for the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, which is to take place soon, will be an opportunity to exchange points of view, proposals and objectives that will strengthen the global disarmament and non-proliferation machinery.

Anti-personnel landmines pose a serious obstacle to the social and economic development of many countries. As a State party to the Ottawa Convention, Colombia is making great efforts to eradicate those lethal weapons that do not discriminate among their victims. My country is working to achieve the full universalization of this important Treaty. We call upon those States that have not yet signed the Convention to do so. Colombia particularly appeals to the donor community and non-governmental organizations to continue resolutely to provide sustained assistance to victims in order that they can be reintegrated into society, both psychologically and socio-economically.

Colombia once again underscores the importance of continuing to vigorously condemn the use of anti-personnel landmines by illegal armed groups. We all know that achieving the primary objective of the Ottawa Convention of a world free of landmines will be a reality only when those groups stop using landmines.

We hope that we will be able to achieve concrete and positive results on the issues before us at this session of the General Assembly.

**Mr. Hannesson** (Iceland): First of all, may I congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the chairmanship of the First Committee. I also congratulate the other members of the Bureau.

As the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iceland stated at the recently concluded general debate (see *A/60/PV.16*), we had high expectations for the outcome of the world summit. However, the outcome document (*resolution 60/1*) fell short of our expectations. Like the Secretary-General and many others, we are very disappointed that disarmament and non-proliferation issues were not even addressed in the document.

We all know that the risk of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction poses one of the most serious security threats of our time, not least because of the danger of such weapons falling into the hands of terrorist organizations and non-State actors. It is vital that the international community strengthen preventive measures to suppress terrorism. Iceland is fully committed to that effort. Last month, the Prime Minister of Iceland, on behalf of Iceland, signed the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism.

Iceland regrets that the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) held in May also failed to respond to the challenges facing the international community. Since its entry into force, the NPT has been the centrepiece of international security. It has

served as the main pillar in global efforts to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons. We must make sure that it is not eroded.

Iceland strongly supports the continuing efforts of Norway and other countries to seek consensus and concrete results in addressing the urgent challenges facing the nuclear-non proliferation regime.

We welcome practical initiatives that can complement the NPT and that are aimed at strengthening the non-proliferation regime, such as the Proliferation Security Initiative and Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) addressing the serious concerns about the risk of non-State actors gaining access to weapons of mass destruction.

Iceland supports efforts to find a diplomatic solution to the many questions surrounding Iran's nuclear programme. The Iranian authorities must fully comply with the International Atomic Energy Agency's requirements for transparency in the development of their nuclear programme.

Iceland welcomes the joint statement by the participants in the six-party talks on the principles for a peaceful and verifiable denuclearization of the Korean peninsula. We note in particular the renewal of the commitment of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to abandon nuclear weapons and all existing nuclear programmes, and its undertaking to return to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). In this context, we emphasize the importance of adopting measures to deal with withdrawal from the NPT.

For a number of years, we have expressed in this forum our regret over the stalemate in the United Nations multilateral disarmament machinery, not least in the Conference on Disarmament. We continue to state our view on the sorry state of affairs at that important forum in Geneva.

Finally, I would like to say that Iceland is firmly committed to the reform of the United Nations. In recent years, the First Committee has been engaged in discussing ways and means to effect organizational reform and reform of our working methods. Let me say once again that we support fewer and better studies and fewer and more focused resolutions which have a realistic chance of being followed up. We believe that we need a procedure according to which we decide what measures are necessary and what their time frame should be, and that resolutions should be renewed only if they are considered important in the light of experience.

**The Chairman**: Before adjourning the meeting, let me recall that the rolling list of speakers for the general debate will be closed today at 6 p.m.

*The meeting rose at 12.35 p.m.*